

warblers; and one of the continental nightingales, the *Sylvia Philomela* of M. Temminck, (or, as I should prefer terming it, the *Philomela major*), is a still larger bird . . .”

In No. 8 of the same journal, 1833, Aug. on page 355, Blyth published a note correcting various *errata* which reads: “line 22, for ‘*major*’, read *magna* . . .”

This use of the name *Philomela major* (later carefully corrected by the author to *magna*) as a substitute name for the bird called *Sylvia Philomela* by Temminck is not a *nomen nudum*. Blyth gives evidence in the same publication, page 199, of knowing what work he was talking about, the only argument for calling this citation a *nomen nudum*. If we examine Temminck’s *Manuel d’Ornithologie*, 1820, éd. 2, tome 1, p. 196 and p. 197, we find the Bec-fin *Philomèle*, *Sylvia Philomela* (Becht.) 1802, an identifiable species. On page 197 Temminck discusses the Bec-fin Soyeux, *Sylvia sericea* (Natter, ex MS.), described and therein validated for the first and only time.

Turning back to Blyth, on page 199 of the May issue of Rennie’s *Field Naturalist* Blyth says: “taken conjointly, and altogether, they seem to intimate, that our nightingale, with the *Sylvia Philomela* and *S. sericea* of M. Temminck, (species closely resembling it), possess sufficient peculiarities to warrant their being placed as a distinct genus”. This latter name in conjunction with the former places Blyth’s current reading material exactly.

As an example of the validity of a name used in this fashion, I refer to Zimmer and Vaurie, (1954, *Bull. Brit. Orn. Cl.* vol. 74, p. 41) in which these authors state that *Pnoepyga* and *Oligura* created by Hodgson in 1844 (*Zool. Miscellany*, p. 82) are not *nomina nuda* by reason of not being described, but are in fact valid genera as they are associated by citation with valid species.

Thus if on the one hand *Pnoepyga* and *Oligura* are said to be valid by Dr. Vaurie by citation and association, then obviously *Philomela magna* Blyth a correction for *Philomela major* Blyth, a substitute name for *Sylvia Philomela* “Temminck” = Bechstein, a valid species, is also not a *nomen nudum*. Thus I believe *Cyanecula wolfei magna* Zarudny and Loudon is a junior secondary homonym of *Philomela magna* Blyth and as such deserves a substitute name. This name I proposed in Postilla, (*tom. cit.*) as *Erithacus svecicus luristanicus*.

I am grateful to Mr. H. G. Deignam for help with Rennie’s publication which is not at Yale.

## On the Clamorous Reed-Warbler *Acrocephalus stentoreus* (Hemprich & Ehrenberg) in Eritrea

by K. D. SMITH

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Heuglin originally obtained this species in Eritrea, where he found it breeding in June. The nest was in the fork of a branch in a thick mangrove swamp on the coast, and contained three fresh eggs. The birds sung there all through the summer months. Kittenberger states that he obtained a

bird at Assab in 1907. None have been reported since then, and some doubt has been cast on the records. Both Selater and Vaurie include Eritrea as within the range of *A. s. stentoreus*, but Mackworth-Praed & Grant mention the species in a note only, with the remark that its occurrence on the Eritrean coast requires confirmation.

Mr. Kenneth Williamson has informed me (*in litt.*) that whilst going through the B.M. collection recently he found that a male collected by myself at Zula, Eritrea on 26th January 1952 is *stentoreus*, having been wrongly identified as *Acrocephalus arundinaceus zarudnyi* Hart. In plumage and measurements, wing 85, it matches *A. s. brunescens* Jerdon, although the locality is far outside the known winter range of that form. Vaurie gives the northern shores of the Persian Gulf and throughout India to Ceylon. The bird obtained had fully enlarged testes and was singing. I saw many birds singing in the swamps in late May but unfortunately assumed them to be *a. zarudnyi* lingering in winter quarters.

It seems therefore that *stentoreus* breeds along the Eritrean coast, whilst *brunescens* is a winter visitor. But Williamson also informs me that a February male from S.W. Arabia, where previously unrecorded, also matches *brunescens*, and as the Zula bird was in breeding condition it seems possible that birds from the southern Red Sea are sedentary and may eventually require a new name. I am grateful to Mr. R. E. Moreau for supplying me with Heuglin's data.

References:—

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## The African rough-winged Swallows

by C. M. N. WHITE

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The genus *Psalidoprocne* has long been treated as comprising a number of distinct species of African swallows. Selater (1930) listed eleven species, and Peters (1960) listed twelve. One species, *nitens*, stands apart from the rest in having a square (not forked) tail, and occurs sympatrically with fork tailed birds in various places, and is clearly a distinct species. Relationships between the other fork tailed birds have never been analysed, and the main difference between them is to be found in the colour of the metallic gloss, the colour of the under wing coverts (white or grey) and in dimensions. One of them, *albiceps*, however differs strikingly from the rest in having in males a white cap and throat. I shall now present evidence to show that a number of the black species can be combined in a single polytypic species. The data is examined in terms of the geographical distribution in relation to variation.

### 1. South and East Africa, north to Kenya and Uganda.

It has been widely assumed that two species, *holomelaena* (with ashy under wing coverts) and *orientalis* (with white under wing coverts) occur sympatrically in part of this area. Thus Grant and Praed (1955 give a map